

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated August 24, 2004.

Claims 1-43 are pending. Claim 31 has been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-43 remain pending in the present application.

The Examiner's indication that claims 9, 24, and 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form is acknowledged and appreciated.

The Examiner objected to the abstract of the disclosure because the word "comprising." In response, the abstract of the disclosure has been amended to remove the word "comprising." Claim 31 has been amended to correct a typographical error, as suggested by the Examiner.

§102 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims number 1-5, 7-8, 10-14, 16-20, 22-23, 25-29, 31-34, 36-37, and 39-42 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Lipkin (U.S. patent 6,721,747). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The present invention provides a method and system for allowing a user to define and use custom metadata. This is accomplished by providing an online metadata management system from which users may create custom vocabularies using a form-driven interface without needing to understand the underlying semantics and syntax of the schema language, such as the RDF schema definition language specified by the W3C.

In contrast, Lipkin is directed to a method and apparatus for searching for and discovering information, such as Web resources, and more particularly to a method and apparatus for finding information associated with RDF metadata on the World Wide

Web (Col. 2, lines 9-13). Lipkin fails to disclose "a method for allowing a user to *define* and use custom metadata," as recited in claims 1 and 16 for several reasons.

First, Lipkin fails to teach or suggest "providing a network accessible server with a metadata library comprising a plurality of metadata vocabularies." In citing Col. 9, lines 40-53, and Col. 117, lines 54-62, it appears that the Examiner has confused the storage actual metadata with the metadata vocabulary/schema that specifies structure and rules for the metadata. The specification of the present invention makes the distinction clear on page 8, lines 3-7 by describing that the metadata vocabulary library is for storage and management of **metadata schemas** or vocabularies that includes both **custom metadata vocabularies** created by the users, as well as actual metadata values associated with specific images.

In contrast, Lipkin in the cited passages consistently refer to **actual metadata**, not schemas or vocabularies that define the metadata. For example, Lipkin Col. 9, lines 40-53 refer to catalog metadata and profile metadata, which refers to actual metadata, not "metadata vocabularies" that specify what is allowable data and its relationships. Lipkin FIG. 5, element 513, refers to metadata not "metadata vocabularies." And Lipkin Col. 117, lines 54-62 merely mentions that the described embodiment uses RDF, which allows multiple vocabularies to be defined and supported. This is described in the Background of the present invention. As described on pages 3 and 4, the problem with RDF is that the syntax is complicated and users will not be able to specify metadata to suit his/her own particular needs without becoming an expert in RDF and XML. Further, even if the user took the time to learn RDF and XML, there is currently no mechanism to support for the storage, display, management, or use of this "user defined" metadata. The present invention provides a solution to this problem by providing an online

metadata management system from which users may create custom vocabularies using a form-driven interface without needing to understand the underlying semantics and syntax of the schema language. Nowhere does Lipkin describe a system for allowing a user to define new, custom metadata vocabularies.

Lipkin further fails to teach or suggest “displaying from the server a user interface on a client computer that allows the user to specify a plurality of properties to thereby create a custom metadata vocabulary,” as recited in claims 1 and 16. The Examiner cites Lipkin Col. 21, lines 20-31 for teaching this step. However, Lipkin does not teach or suggest the creation of a new metadata vocabulary in this passage. Instead Lipkin is referring to objects with user defined fields and Lipkin’s user interface simply allows the user to add new fields for object. The support for this is already built into Lipkin’s underlying schema. Therefore, Lipkin’s vocabulary supports extended data from the very start. Objects with user defined fields are well-known in the art and do not result in a new vocabulary specification.

Incidentally, Lipkin’s business objects cannot be considered analogous to the claimed custom metadata vocabulary because Lipkin defines a business object as “a Java object of persistent state that represents some entity in a business application, such as an employee or company (Col. 11, lines 65-67). A metadata vocabulary, in contrast, defines metadata.

Lipkin also fails to teach or suggest “storing the custom metadata vocabulary in the metadata library,” as recited in claims 1 and 16. The Examiner cites Lipkin Col. 12, lines 60-64, which describes a metadata store of tables containing the definition of each type of object in the system and which methods to invoke. Thus, this is not a general purpose store capable of supporting new vocabularies (i.e., new tables). Instead,

Lipkin's metadata store stores actual metadata concerning the objects.

Because Lipkin fails to teach each and every element of independent claims 1 and 16, Lipkin fails to anticipate claims 1 and 16 under §102. It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 31 includes similar recitations and is also allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 16.

§103 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 6, 21 and 35 rejected under 35 USC §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of Halstead et al. (U.S. patent 6,502,102). The Examiner rejected claims 15, 30, and 43 under 35 USC §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of Chau et al. (US 20030014397A1).

A secondary reference stands or falls with the primary reference. Because Lipkin fails to teach or suggest a method and system for allowing a user to create new metadata vocabularies, and for storing those new vocabularies in the metadata library, a combination of Lipkin with Halstead or Chau also fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention. Accordingly, claims 6, 15, 21, 30, and 35 and 43 are patentable over the references for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 16, and 31.

The arguments above apply with full force and effect to the remaining dependent claims because they are based on allowable independent claims. Therefore, the dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1-43 are allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and passage to issue of claims 1-43 as now presented.

Applicants' attorney believes this application in condition for allowance. Should

any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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